

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 AID-20 PC-15 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 A-01

OPR-02 SY-10 OC-06 CCO-00 DRC-01 IO-13 /183 W

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P R 051150Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7058

INFO USINT CAIRO

AMEMBASSY ADDISABABA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 1978

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS SU

SUBJ: ANTI-NIMAIRI DEVELOPMENTS

REF: KHARTOUM 1966

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. GOS DECLARES NATIONAL EMERGENCY FOR FIFTEEN DAYS FOLLOWING RECEIPT PETITION CONTAINING THREAT OF GENERAL

STRIKE BY SOME UNION MEMBERS INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF KEY SUDAN RAILWAY WORKERS UNION. CHALLENGE COULD BE SERIOUS IF IMPLEMENTED. END SUMMARY.

2. GENERAL STRIKE THREAT. STRIKE THREAT (PARA 3 REFTEL) RECEIVED IMPETUS EVENING SEPT 5 WHEN SIX UNION LEADERS REPRESENTING "TRADE UNIONIST MOVEMENT" OF 16 UNIONS SIGNED PETITION TO VP BAGHIR THREATENING GENERAL STRIKE IF DEMANDS NOT MET. DEMANDS INCLUDED (A) CESSATION SSU EPSEC GEN ABUL GASSIM "TERRORIST" ACTIVITIES; (B) REINSTITUTION
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PUBLIC FREEDOM AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS; (C) RETURN OF

ARMY TO BARRACKS AND REOPENING ALLSCHOOLS; AND (D) RELEASE OF THOSE DETAINED IN RECENT DAYS INCLUDING BAR ASSOCIATION MEMBERS. IF DEMANDS NOT MET (NO TIME SPECIFIED, BUT EMB UNDERSTANDS ORAL DEADLINE WAS 10:00 AM, THURSDAY, SEPT 6), THE "TRADE UNIONIST MOVEMENT" WILL INSTITUTE A GENERAL STRIKE. PETITION STRESSED "TRADE UNIONIST MOVEMENT" ACTING IN RESPONSE ITS "HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITIES TO RESORE TRANQUILITY TO ALL CATEGORIES SUDANESE POPULATION". PETITION SIGNED BY SIX INDIVIDUALS OF WHOM MOST IMPORTANT IS OSMAN GASOUR, KHARTOUM REP OF SUDAN RAILWAYS UNION. OTHER UNIONS LISTED WERE WORKERS TRADE UNION MECHANIZED TRANSPORT DEPT, WORKERS TRADE UNION FOOD INDUSTRIES, LEATHER AND PLASTIC INDUSTRIES, STORES AND EQUIP DEPT, AND PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES. ALL SIX LEADERS SUBSEQUENTLY ARRESTED. SUDAN RAILWAYS WORKERS UNION PRESIDENT METAI NOT LISTED, BUT HE ALLEGEDLY GAVE ORAL SUPPORT. THERE IS RELIABLE REPORT NOW (2:30 PM) THAT RAILROAD STRIKE HAS BEGUN.

3. STATE OF EMERGENCY. GOS RESPONDED MORNING SEPT 5 BY DECLARING FIFTENN-DAY STATED OF EMERGENCY (UNTIL SEPT 20 UNDER ART. 111 NEW CONSTITUTION WHICH PROVIDES FOR MAXIMUM 30-DAY PERIOD IF "IMMINENT DANGER THREATENS..REPUBLICAN ORGANS OF THE STATE...OR ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PEOPLE"). CIVIL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS ARE AUTOMATICALLY SUSPENDED WITH EXCEPTION OF RIGHT RESORT TO THE COURTS. IN DECLARING EMERGENCY, VP BAGHIR ACTED ON BEHALF ABSENT PRESIDENT NIMAIRI, CASTIGATED "REVERSAL" OF UNION LEADERS POSITIONS YESTERDAY WHICH INCLUDED PLEDGE OF TWO HOURS EXTRA WORK BY SUDAN RAILWAYS, AND INDICATED ADOPTION BY SUDANESE OF A "SPECTATORS" ATTITUDE WOULD BE CONSIDERED "HOSTILITY" TOWARD THE REGIME.

4. ASSOCIATED EVENTS. RMY HAS REPLACED POLICE AT CONTROL POINTS. WEAPONS CARRIERS AND TROOPS HAVE REAPPEARED AT BRIDGES AND OTHER PLACES FROM WHICH THEY WERE WITHDRAWN ON SATURDAY, BUT OVERALL PRESENCE IS LIMITED. QUEUES HAVE DEVELOPED AT GAS STATIONS WHERE PURCHASERS' NAMES ARE BEING TAKEN AND GAS RATIONED. INCREASED FOOD BUYING
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REPORTED. KHARTOUM AND OMDURMAN MARKETS OPEN AND BUS STATIONS QUIET. MEETING OF SSU COMMITTEES AND UNION ORGANIZERS UNDERWAY AT SSU HDQTRS. SEVERAL REPORTS THAT MININTERIOR ABDALLA AL-HASSAN HAS RESIGNED OR IS UNDER ARREST FOR CRITICISM ABUL GASSIM TACTICS IN BY-PASSING MININTERIOR RESPONSIBILITIES. WE HAVE ONE REPORT OF SOUTHERN TROOPS BEING SHIFTED TO KHARTOUM.

5. COMMENT: THREAT OF GENERAL STRIKE IS FURTHER PROMOTION 1964 TACTICS WHICH BROUGHT ABOUT FALL ABBOD REGIME. BAGHIR'S REFERENCE TO "SPECTATORS" BEING CONSIDERED AS HOSTILE IS ALSO REFERENCE TO 1964 PUBLIC APATHY. ACTUAL STRIKE BY SUDAN RAILWAYS WOULD QUICKLY CREATE SEVERE FOOD AND FUEL SITUATION IN KHARTOUM. GOS DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY CONFIRMS ITS RECOGNITION THAT ANY SUDANESE GOVERNMENT IS A VIRTUAL HOSTAGE TO THE RAILROAD. ASIDE FOR THE CONTINUED LOYALTY OF THE ARMY, QUESTION NOW IS EXTENT TO WHICH UNION PETITIONISTS ACTUALLY REPRESENT UNIONS OR ARE ACTING ONLY ON POLITICAL INSPIRATION. IF FORMER, GOS COULD BE IN REAL CRISIS. IF LATTER, UNION FORCES WILL SPLIT MAKING GENERAL STRIKE LESS EFFECTIVE. PUBLIC ATTITUDE AT THIS POINT APPEARS TO BE "WAIT-AND-SEE" WHICH AS VP BAGHIR CORRECTLY FORESEES HAS EROSIVE POTENTIAL. FRITTS

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